and herbs from which they prepare simple medicines for their needs. Nowadays they are able to attend the Government dispensary in Aliábád, but its nostrums have not yet undermined their faith in their own home-made remedies. We very much wished that we had possessed some knowledge of medical botany and could have brought home records of their medicine; but like so many other branches of knowledge which we regretfully ignored, it would have been a specialist's job, and we had out hands full enough with our own work and all too little time at our disposal.

During the imprisonment of winter the women cut and stitch the winter cloaks, adorning each long seam with a double row of backstitching, which is not only seemly to the eye but serves to hold the raw edges in place. The stiff, shaped collar is decorated with varied designs, diamonds, triangles, and straight lines in the same backstitch. Happily few of them can yet afford to let Dirzi Nazir replace their time-honoured skill with the soulless, cotton stitchery of his sewing machine. We noted with grief that the beautifully hand-embroidered *chogas* with which the Mir presented us this time all had their seams Singer-sewn, and had thus lost (for us) much of their charm.

With prudent foresight the woman makes the *choga* six good inches too long for its destined wearer, and introduces a deep tuck above its lower edge. It will last at least three years and will shrink in successive washings. You can tell at a glance whether a man is wearing his best, or medium, or oldest *choga* by the depth—or absence—of the tuck. In former days embroidery was the monopoly of the few royal ladies who beguiled the tedium of their too-sheltered life by decorating *chogas* with bold designs in bright-coloured silks, or working raised patterns of gold and silver on velvet saddle-cloths, and above all in elaborating delicate designs in cross-stitch for the crown and border of their lovely little caps. Where we clumsily work cross-stitch with wool on canvas, they painstakingly cross-stitch the individual threads of calico with bright, gay silks. The patterns are infinitely varied—we possess dozens of specimens of this fine work, no two are alike—but

all appeared to us to suggest Persian inspiration. I heard one lady say with regret for a golden past: "What is the world coming to? Why nowadays the very peasant girls embroider silken caps for themselves!"

True enough; now that a little money filters into almost every home the women can get hold of coloured silk from India or Kashgar, and it was a common sight to see girls and women open a tiny home-made bag that hung on their tunic, and take out a strip or circle of calico, a needle, and a bunch of silk, and continue work on a dainty cap. The threads of the cloth were carefully counted and the design traced out in black thread. The silks they used were unspun, clinging masses that I found impossible to handle, and how they manipulated them so skilfully with fingers roughened, you would have thought, by field work, I could not divine. For about 1s. 6d. they can buy enough silk to cover one cap with minute embroidery, and they blend their colours, red, blue, green, orange, purple, yellow, and black, with unerring taste. We laid in a store of their favourite shades so that on occasion we could make an acceptable gift to a bride preparing her trousseau.

After a first experience of trifling gifts of balls and combs we had decided that it would be a crime to spoil the simple, spontaneous kindness of the children or their parents by indiscriminate giving. So we restrained a longing to distribute even sweets and pins, and only made an occasional present on very special occasions or for very definite services rendered. On the other hand, we made a note of such things as would be useful and acceptable, and gathered a hoard of them for our ultimate visits of farewell.

Amongst the women's crafts I have already mentioned the neat little "ashtrays" they conjure from the residual mush of apricot kernels after they have extracted the oil. Washing is amongst them a simple matter. Having no fat, they can make no soap, but there is a plant, called *himan*, which they grow amongst their vegetables, the seeds of which when pounded yield a delightful soapy lather. This is used for special washings only. Every-day cotton clothes are simply rinsed in cold water, flung on a flat stone and beaten with a wooden mallet. When

THE FIRST OF THE HARVEST

one day a group of men sitting pensively under a mulberry tree silently munching unripe fallen fruit, but the most pathetic sight was groups of little girls crouched beside a water-channel scooping out sand and mud and forming it into various types of breads and cakes which they pretended to "bake like Mother." They knew nothing of modern psychology, and were unaware that we interpreted their poor little mud pies as wish-fulfilments.

Cuckoos and larks were now filling the air with welcome, strangely home-like sounds.

One day the news of the Quetta earthquake reached us by telephone and spread dismay in twenty homes which had sons in British service there. How to get news? Mercifully the suspense was not prolonged. Thanks to the humane arrangements which allowed survivors to telegraph free, a telegram was telephoned through from one of the Hunza men to say that he and all his compatriots had escaped, owing to the fact that they were all employed by officers of the Staff College. It would be blasphemy to suppose that those were all unrighteous on whom the Tower of Siloam fell, but we could hardly resist a suspicion that the God of Earthquakes shared something of our feeling for the folk of Hunza.

It was the very end of June before the Barley Harvest was in sight, but as the time approached nearer and nearer, by painfully slow degrees, we saw women and girls devoting all their spare time to making new caps for the jollifications of Ginání, and the men, who are not a whit less vain, were already sporting bright new shirts in anticipation. We came on Kaníza and Apícho putting the last touches on a cap made of some scraps of Tootal material which I had given to Kaníza to dress the new doll that Yaman had made for her. They were weaving the braid edging straight on to the cap, stitching it on as they wove. The method was interesting: six long coarse crimson threads are made fast by both ends to the edge of the double cap—outside, and slightly padded lining. The stitcher holds the cap inside out. The braider sits near and takes the six long loops of equal length, passing three over the fingers of the right and three over the fingers of the left hand; then she slips the left-hand loops on to the right-hand fingers, deftly lifts the

2: Lorimer T-3 (1920-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

original right-hand loops off on to the left fingers carefully crossing each pair of threads as she does so. Widely drawing her two hands apart Apícho then drove the set of crossed threads down on to the edge of the cap, where Kaníza secured the twelve-fold plait with a large stitch. This was repeated *ad infinitum*, the braid only showing on the right side of the cap and the long ugly stitches on the wrong. The process looks rather like cat's-cradle. I had always wondered why, when they take such infinite trouble over the minute cross-stitch embroidery of their caps and the hand-plaited twelve-ply braid, they finished the cap off with these long stitches. I also wondered why it seemed impossible to detach the braid without its ravelling out. I now saw that braid-weaving and stitching were part of one elaborate process.

By July 1st the luckier folk were already cutting their barley and clearing a field for their threshing floor without waiting for the formal harvest-initiation ceremonies of the Ginání, the date of which is naturally fixed by the Mir to suit Báltít, 1,500 feet higher, and consequently some days behind Aliábád. All our potatoes were by now in full flower and our wheat was turning "fox-colour."

On July 5th we rode over to Báltít for yet another of the Hunza festivals, and ye Gods! it was hot on the road—90 degrees in the shade—and we had to start at the very hottest time of day, about 2 p.m. The Mir gave us tea in his nice shady grass-grown apple orchard before we remounted and climbed up to the Fort. It is not easy to convey how steep the road is that in Báltít corresponds to the Mall. Your pony steps from one boulder to the next with a great lurch, his spine almost vertical, and for my part I could only just stick on by my usual technique of thrusting my stirrups back to the root of his tail and firmly gripping his mane with my right hand. The road runs between high stone walls and zigzags wildly. The little box-like stone houses of the capital are piled on top of each other in the craziest way—town-planning has to accommodate itself to the vagaries of a precipitous mountain side. They are indescribably picturesque, but you would not think them possible to live in, yet they provide a high degree of simple comfort.

made entirely of soft pliable leather, the lower part, including the soles, from yak hide and the upper part from cow or ibex hide.

I wanted to learn as much as possible about the good people of Hunza. Therefore I was interested in their crafts and craftsmanship.

All of the cloth used in making the garments the people wear and the special Hunzan hats are woven on looms that have been in use for hundreds of years. They weave 3 distinct types of material. It takes about 3 days to weave a length of approximately 15 yards of the best cloth, which is hardly sufficient to make a man's and a woman's "choga." The woman's requires 7 yards and the man's takes 9 yards. They trade commodities in exchange for the weaving. Then, during the winter, the men of the households cut and stitch the garments into durable, warm clothing.

The village blacksmith is also the music maker. Somehow, to me, that seems most appropriate for the clang of the hammer on the anvil rings a true music. These blacksmiths and musicians live in a section entirely of their own and they seem to keep mostly to themselves. It seems that all of the blacksmith-musicians of Hunza belong to a tribe known as the Bericho.

These people were sent to Hunza long, long ago by the Prince of Baltistan who was repaying a favor rendered him by the Mir of Hunza. These people have retained their independence and identity and do not generally take part in Hunzan activities. They even speak a language of their own known as Dumaki. This is also referred to as the speech of the Doma, or Bericho, of Hunza.

These people dwell in a quaint village or a community entirely of their own located just below Baltit. The history, the behavior and the manners and occupa-